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BOOK NOTICES

Social Idealism and the Changing Theology.

By Gerald Birney Smith. New York: Macmillan, 1913. Pp. xxiii+251. \$1.25.

This volume embodies the substance of a series of lectures delivered at the Yale Divinity School, upon the Nathaniel William Taylor Foundation, in April, 1912. The lectures deal successively with, "Ecclesiastical Ethics and Authoritative Theology," "The Discrediting of Ecclesiastical Ethics," "The Moral Challenge of the Modern World," "The Ethical Basis of Religious Assurance," and "The Ethical Transformation of Theology."

In this volume Professor Smith attempts "an evaluation of the ethical aspects of theological reconstruction, in the hope of disclosing a genuine moral dynamic in the methods of critical scholarship which are being so generally adapted in our theological study"; for he is justly apprehensive lest the piety of the churches and the learning of the schools become alienated from each other. Can one obey both "the inherited feeling of obligation to accept as final truth whatever the Bible teaches," and on the other hand, "the inner imperative of honesty to one's own real beliefs." Is the work of theological reconstruction to issue only in "mediating" theologies, continually insistent that the old "substance" is presented in the new "form"? Or can the static-dualistic world-view and the authoritarian method be exchanged for another world-view and method which shall enable us to find our religious values in the world of our actual experience?

Mutual understanding is needed—"An understanding of the moral values belonging to the older loyalty and an equally accurate understanding of the moral values inherent in the newer methods." So far from issuing in a new dogmatism, the work of theological reconstruction will yield formulae which do not profess finality or infallibility. A new dogmatism "would leave men still dependent on a guaranteed *content* of theology rather than on a reliable *method* of ascertaining the meaning of religion." This new method, the basis of our assurance, is none other than the inductive—the scientific—method. "If there can enter into Christian theology this confidence in the outcome of a direct investigation of the facts of life," says Professor Smith, "the way will open for such a co-operation between the awakened social spirit and the work of the theologian that our religion will be immensely strengthened, both in the theologian's sense of inner confidence and in its value for leaders in the modern task of social regeneration." "Nothing can prevent mankind from sinking beneath the tremendous temptations due to modern wealth and power save the creation of a strong religious life which

shall lead us to consecrate our control over nature to the process of bringing in the kingdom of God. But such a religious life is possible only as a religious interpretation shall be given to this new world of our modern life and thought.

This volume is a frank, clear-cut, constructive, and exceedingly suggestive analysis of the situation which twentieth-century Christianity faces. It is not a "pious" book, but is profoundly religious and dominated by a spirit of transparent moral loyalty. It is a most welcome contribution to present-day theological solutions.

The Most Beautiful Book Ever Written.

The Gospel according to Luke. By D. A. Hayes. New York: Eaton & Mains, 1913. Pp. viii+183. \$0.75.

The striking title of this volume comes from the French critic Renan, a scholar of much aesthetic feeling and insight. The author begins by gathering together all the New Testament data bearing upon the personality of Luke, "the beloved physician." In doing this, he makes a very interesting and ingenious presentation, whether all his conjectures are true or not. Passing on from this introduction, Dr. Hayes takes up the Gospel of Luke itself, discussing its sources, date, and place of composition; its characteristics, as a book composed by an educated man and a physician with Pauline leanings; its motive, as a gospel for the Gentiles, the poor, and the outcast; its humanity, as emphasizing childhood, womanhood, and the fraternal aspects of the work of Jesus. This is a useful and suggestive study which will appeal to a large audience.

The New Testament Manuscripts in the Freer Collection. Part I. The Washington Manuscript of the Four Gospels.

By Henry A. Sanders, University of Michigan. ("University of Michigan Studies," Humanistic Series, Vol. IX.) New York: Macmillan, 1912. Pp. viii+247, with 5 plates. \$2.00.

Five years ago the world of biblical scholarship was set agog by the news that an important collection of biblical manuscripts in Greek had been discovered in Egypt and purchased by Mr. Charles L. Freer of Detroit, Mich. The book here under review preceded by some weeks the magnificent volume wherein Mr. Freer's liberality has presented to the interested public a splendid facsimile edition of his manuscript of the four Gospels. This, by all odds the most important part of the Freer collection, is the second of these